

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2833

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: EWWT US MX

SUBJECT: SEA-LAND VENTURE INTO US/MEXICO WATER-BORNE TRADE

REF STATE 21204

1. EMB OF OPINION THAT ANY DECISION TO PROCEED WITH OPENING WATER-BORNE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE BETWEEN US AND MEXICO BY SEA-LAND SERVICE SHOULD BE BASED ON SOUND FEASIBILITY STUDY. TRANSPORTACION MARITIMA MEXICANA (TMM), PRINCIPAL MEXICAN OWNED STEAMSHIP LINE, HAS SUCH STUDY UNDERWAY WHICH, IF FAVORABLE, COULD LEAD TO PURCHASE OF TWO OR MORE "ROLL-ON ROLL-OFF" SHIPS FOR US/MEXICO SERVICE. ALSO, GOM AGENCY CAMINOS Y PUENTES FEDERALES DE INGRESOS Y SERVICIOS CONEXOS RECENTLY PUT ONE OF ITS FERRIES (THE "GUAYCURA" - 200 PASSENGERS AND 200 CARS OR 10 TRAILERS, MAXIMUM CAPACITY 200 TONS) INTO SERVICE ON MIAMI-PUERTO MORELOS, Q.R. ROUTE TO PROVIDE RO-RO SERVICE TO UYCATAN. IT IS LOOKING FOR US PARTNER TO ASSIST IT IN THIS SERVICE, ANTICIPATING ADDITION OF SECOND SHIP AND EXPANSION OF SERVICE (PRINCIPALLY TOURIST) TO INCLUDE STOPS AT VERACRUZ AND TAMPICO.

2. DESPITE ABOVE, OUTLOOK FOR SUCCESS OF VENTURE IS MRUKY. TMM HAS SEEN ITS US-MEXICO SERVICE DECLINE OVER YEARS (IT HANDLES MAJORITY OF US GULF-MEXICO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRADE) DUE TO LOWER PRICED COMPETITION FROM

RAILROADS AND REPORTEDLY HIGH PORT COSTS AT NEW YORK
AND NEW ORLEANS. CONGESTION AND LABOR PROBLEMS AT
MEXICAN PORTS, ESPECIALLY VERACRUZ, ALSO PROBLEM,
ALTHOUGH SITUATION HAS BEEN IMPROVING. AS RESULT, MANY
COMPANIES IN MEXICO USE PORTS IN HOUSTON AND BROWNSVILLE
FOR IMPORTS/EXPORTS, CONNECTING WITH THEM BY RAIL AND/OR
TRUCK. CONTAINER HANDLING FACILITIES ALSO EXTREMELY
LIMITED, WITH CONTAINER CRANES PRESENT ONLY IN NEW PORT
OF LAZARO CARDENAS AND TUXPAN (SMALL CRANE), AND ONE
PLANE FOR VERACRUZ, MANZANILLO AND TAMPICO.
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Message Attributes

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